

## USEFUL INFORMATION FOR PRACTITIONERS

*Social Issues*  
*Canada*  
*Women*  
¶Canada now has an equal rights amendment covering women, the handicapped, youth, the elderly and racial, ethnic & religious minorities. Adopted in compromise form as one of the most controversial parts of the new Constitution in '82, it was the only portion not taking effect immediately. 3-year delay was part of compromise. So was an escape hatch known as the "notwithstanding clause" that lets provincial legislatures vote 5-year delays. All the questions familiar in US ERA debate must now be resolved, e.g., will armed forces women be sent into combat?

*Graphic Printing*  
¶Collection of corporate graphic identity manuals can be viewed at UFla's College of Journalism & Communications library. Grad student Sherri Korfin created the collection. 20 manuals -- more than 100 pgs each -- show successful graphic identity programs from companies such as US Steel, ARCO, Ford, Sherwin Williams, NBC, Rockwell International. Contributions to this expandable visual databank are encouraged. (For an index of the data & a glossary of graphic identity terms, contact Jim Anderson, Dep't of Adv'g & PR, Gainesville 32611; 904/392-1686)

*Research*  
¶Walter Lindenmann, one of the few researchers with experience as a pr practitioner, has left Hill & Knowlton to join Opinion Research Corp's financial services group as vp. Move attests to changes hitting financial services sector, which hasn't quite made it to 1-stop storefront offices but is trying. Before his 9 yrs as pres of H&K's Group Attitudes Corp. -- where he became virtually synonymous with public relations research-- Lindenmann was dir univ rels at Hofstra, pio at Ct. Dep't of Educ, UPI reporter, educ ed. of Denver Post & Hartford Times & a/s at H&K. His doctorate is in sociology. He's active in PRSA, AAPOR, American Mktg Ass'n. Many of his studies have appeared in prr. Not your stereotypical researcher.

*Hospitals*  
¶Data on how well hospitals treat illnesses is now public. Pushed by businesses concerned about healthcare costs, Reagan administration decided ability to compare hospitals was in consumers' interest. However, Dep't of Health & Human Services refused to go the next step & make data on individual doctors public for the same purposes. American Medical Ass'n strongly opposed that. Only patients whose cases get reviewed by Professional Review Organizations (mandated by Congress to monitor Medicare) are included in the database. Hospitals argue that such comparisons are misleading since some treat more older or sicker people than others, depending on their market or specialties. For practitioners, move could be a public relations nightmare or a competitive marketing opportunity. Data include admission rates, lengths of stay, medical procedures employed, prevalence of iatrogenic disease (illnesses acquired in the hospital) & death rates per dep't or type of illness.

## WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

*Who's Who in PR*  
*3x*  
AWARDS. NY Women in Communication names Eleanor Lambert (Eleanor Lambert Division of Creamer Dickson Basford) recipient of its Matrix Award for achieving highest level of professional excellence...Ardelle Coleman Whitehead (The Whiteheads, Inc.) receives PRSA Phoenix Chapter's PERCY Award for excellence in practice of pr, active

support of PRSA & contributions to the Phoenix community.

HONORS. Neal Spelce (Neal Spelce Communications, Austin, Texas) appointed to Governor's Commission on Physical Fitness.

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## BUILDING MYSTIQUE: GOOD OLE PUBLICITY STRENGTHENS CUSTOMER LOYALTY -- TO THE POINT OF BUILDING A CULT FOLLOWING FOR WHITE CASTLE; UNIQUE PRODUCT, PSYCHOLOGY OF SCARCITY, TRUE-STORY ADS BUILD LEGEND

*Advertising*  
Its small, square, steamed burgers (only 28¢-30¢) and its white-castellated stands are traditions its customers jealously guard. Tho it's a regional company, "we do have a loyal cadre of customers all over the country. And in a public relations sense, we've capitalized on it," Gail Turley, dpr & adv'g, told prr.

About 3 yrs ago, during the time of the multi-national peacekeeping force in Lebanon, an AP story told how French & Italian troops were eating hot meals with wine & fresh baked bread while US Marines were eating cold C-rations. "We decided that was a heck of a note, so we shipped them 3,000 hamburgers. That probably was our single most effective pr/publicity event. Whenever we have the opportunity to do something along these lines, we do it."

*Advertising*  
Another legend-building activity is its commercials. They are based on true stories -- things its customers do. For example: "One day an entire wedding party pulled up at our retail store, arranged themselves in front of the place and had a formal portrait made. Later they sent us a copy of the picture. They told us the reason they did it was because stopping at White Castle had been a big part of their dating life. They wanted it to be a part of their wedding day." So a commercial was made of it.

Then, in NJ, a customer & his wife celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary by renting a Rolls Royce Silver Cloud to go to dinner at a White Castle...because that's where they went on their very first date. In Cincinnati, a couple celebrating their wedding anniversary returned to the very location they visited on their wedding day in 1933 -- a White Castle. "We'll be producing that commercial this year. One person even asked to be married in a White Castle. The answer was no because everything must "have limits."

When Coors beer went national, its famed mystique was lost & a vacuum created for a legendary, regional product. White Castle has cornered that distinction.

Legends accrue the power of public opinion. When the Overland Park, Kansas, planning commission suggested that the proposed White Castle hamburger stand there be built without its usual tower and painted beige instead of white, outcrys from loyal customers came from all across the country. According to Turley, the gist of the letters was: "There are too few things in our society today that are constant. This is one of them. Leave it alone." One reporter in Detroit described it this way: "Somebody's messing with my childhood." The town has since decided that white is beautiful and the tower is fine.



Last year, on its toll-free number for carry-out ordering (1-800-WCASTLE), it sold 350,000 hamburgers. "We'll deliver fully cooked, frozen hamburgers anywhere in the contiguous 48 states by Federal Express jetliner. Because of the high moisture content from steaming, our hamburgers are highly compatible with freezing & micro-waving."

Company just shipped 548,000 frozen hamburgers to 4 different locations -- all for fundraising events. "These folks are reselling the hamburgers at premium prices because they're not normally available" in their areas. 1) A small parochial school in Albuquerque places its order yearly. Money it raises "has kept the school open." 2) Town of Fountain Hills, Arizona, has been placing its order for the last 5 years. It bands together with the town's service clubs & civic org'ns for a festival built around its shipment. 3) Customer in Westminster, Calif, is using his order to raise funds for the Statue of Liberty restoration. 4) Spartan Foundation of San Jose State U supports the athletic program thru sale of the burgers.

"We do have a following. When we have an opportunity to keep it alive, we fan the flames, which is what good public relations is all about," Turley feels.

THE OTHER FACE OF PUBLICITY:  
HOLLYWOOD ONCE CALLED PR "EXPLOITATION"  
& HENRY ROGERS STILL PRACTICES IT

Be outrageous. Grab the spotlight.  
Just get into people's thoughts.  
That strategy may still be viable.  
Consider this New Orleans Times-Pic

lead: "It's a world of stretched limousines, power lunches, sleek, tanned bodies and perfectly tailored clothes. Public relations. The art of developing images and selling products. That's what Henry Rogers says it is. He should know. He's been at it for 50 years, as founder and chairman of Rogers & Cowan, the fifth-largest privately held pr firm in America."

Is it ok to say anything to get publicity -- even if it may damage your profession & others in it? Promotion for Rogers' new book, Rogers' Rules for Success (St.Martin's/Marek), is replete with such stuff. "He's the number 1 public relations expert" is a stock phrase -- a distinction that might draw debate among practitioners.

Certainly he is successful. From press agent to large firm. Combination of entertainment & corporate clientele. And the book is fascinating reading about his career & clients -- with some good advice on "psychorelations" & other topics practitioners will find useful. But -- the questions are:

1. Were the old ward heelers correct in saying, "Write anything you want about me, as often as you want, just spell my name right"? Is familiarity, name recognition more longlasting than the subjects linked to the name?
2. Is controversy the great university? Saying iconoclastic or unusual things gains entry to people's minds, and until that awareness is achieved nothing can happen.

COMPETITION FOR SURVIVAL AMONG HOSPITALS  
FOSTERS THE IN-HOUSE FIRM CONCEPT

1) At Florida Hospital (Orlando) the public relations department is an in-house firm -- but not set up to be

an income producer. Dpr Kent Seltman explains its purpose is a) to receive agency

discounts on ad placements in an effort to offer services "a lot cheaper than any outside firm." And b) to provide cost accounting to the hospital.

"This firm exists to offer a more economical means of providing promotional/advertising services for the hospital. We'll always be much cheaper than the competition outside. And we have a quality product that is at least equal if not better than outside agencies. If we maintain these -- quality & lower price -- there's no real risk involved."

"Organizations like HMOs are saying to patients, 'If you bring your business here, we'll do it for X dollars.' So we need to know what services are costing." In-house firm is part of its overall cost accounting thrust to identify expenses, then associate them with services.

2) "Hospitals have to diversify and have other means of income because of the way healthcare is going and its high cost," another hospital practitioner told pr. Her pr/adv'g dep't is part of a for-profit "mother company" which oversees the not-for-profit hospital. Department functions as an outside firm for other clients, hopefully will become profit center. Tho there are many advantages, she warns that it "can be frightening if you don't educate your hospital as you move along."

3) Seven nonprofit hospitals within a 25-mile radius in Florida have joined together to form Nonprofit Hospital Venture. Company bulk orders pharmaceuticals, is putting together a home-health agency -- and the group shares some marketing, explains one affiliated practitioner.

WELL, IT LOOKS LIKE COKE IS "IT"...  
AT LEAST FROM A PUBLIC RELATIONS PERSPECTIVE

In response to pr's comments about Coke's formula change, counselor Harold Burson replies:

"In my own career, I've never been in a situation where the public relations function was more a part of the decision-making & implementation process. Discussion began last January. Public relations was involved from the very beginning."

He says Coke's hq pr staff has 30-40 people, not "abolished" as pr reported. Its CEO is "as pr conscious an executive as I've ever met." Ass't vp-corp comms Carlton Curtis says they have "scores of publications for employees, including "The Refresher," a monthly magazine. Pub'ns are divided geographically and by lines of business. Entire staff wasn't told about the formula change for security reasons. Instead, a task force within the staff worked on the announcement.

Curtis was responsible for public communication announcing the change. Success is evident in these survey figures: Research done 24 hrs after the press conference by Pat Caddell showed that unaided, 67% were aware of the formula change; aided, 82% were aware. These may be unprecedented figures for a commercial operation; only gov't scandals usually achieve such interest.

As a case study in public relations strategy, this is up there with Tylenol, TMI, Rely, Love Canal & Reagonomics. pr asked why Coke had made the move & in the way it did. Burson asks: "What were the risks & dangers in not doing it?" Stay tuned.

Publicity  
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PR General

Hospital

Marketing

Publicity  
Research